

# Marketing 101

# Developing a presentation

It takes time and effort to develop an effective presentation, one that will be informational and enjoyable. Here's a few tips to keep in mind during the development process.

## **Know Your Audience**

The first step in development of an effective presentation or speech is to research your audience. Find out who will be present, their ages, interests and occupations. Find out how many people will be present as well.

You will also need to know the presentation format. How long will you have to speak? Will you be part of a panel? Will there be a questions and answer section? Who will introduce you? Will you have to introduce anyone or yourself? Will there be equipment available? Can you bring your own equipment, including powerpoint projector and computer? Will you have access to a screen? Will you have a microphone? etc. All of these considerations will be useful when sitting down to craft your messages.

## **Have a Clear Goal**

Set your goal for the presentation, then organize the presentation around your goal. Do you want to inform or persuade? Do you want to provoke thought, or move the audience to action? State your basic message or goal several times throughout your presentation. Repetition will help the audience remember your goal.

## **Make three to four main points**

Remember that you don't have to deliver mountains of information. Many studies have shown that people remember very few of the facts that speakers share. Three to four main points can make your presentation successful. Illustrate each point with an example or story. People relate to stories and are more likely to remember the points when they are tied to examples.

## **Give your audience something of value**

If they can walk away with some new information, insight, or idea, you have been successful. If they walk away feeling better about themselves, feeling better about a job they have to do, you will have been successful. If your audience walks away feeling happy or entertained, they will consider the time spent with you worthwhile.

Add Style to Speech with the use of anecdotes; stories; humor; repetition of ideas; a sprinkling of spunky, short sentences, facts and statistics; items and ideas grouped in sets of threes; and a catchy/memorable title.

## **Make a strong conclusion**

Use your conclusion as an opportunity to reiterate the purpose of your talk. Summarize your main points and what you hope the audience gained from your presentation.

## **Prepare thoroughly**

Public speaking is just like any other task--to do it successfully requires your time, effort, and preparation. Make sure you know your subject well. The better you know the topic, the more comfortable you will be during the presentation.

## **Prepare your own introduction**

Prepare your own introduction and provide a copy in advance to the person who will introduce you. Bring an extra copy of the introduction along to the presentation--just in case. Also, bring several extra copies of your presentation in case anyone wants a copy.

## Visual aids

Visual aids, including props such as a book, photo or poster; an exhibit; video; powerpoint presentation, slides or overheads can enhance your speech. When used properly they can help reinforce your points. However, you must choose and use visual aids carefully. Make sure they are visible to everyone in the audience, that you can handle them smoothly; and that they enhance your message.

### *Sources:*

<http://www.usda.gov/news/pubs/fcn/table.htm>

<http://www.toastmasters.org/tips.htm>

<http://www.stresscure.com/jobstress/speak.html>

<http://www.EffectiveMeetings.com/>

## Powerpoint slides/Slides/Overheads

The basic rule with powerpoint presentations, slides and overheads, is less is more. The most effective slides or overheads are short and to the point. You'll lose your audience if they're busy trying to figure out poorly written or poorly designed overheads.

Design slides/overheads to highlight important points, not to duplicate your entire presentation. Never read to the audience from the slides, but it's okay to pause and let them read it themselves.

Strive for a visual balance between all the text and graphic images on your slides. Don't crowd your information too close to the edges. Don't crowd too many words on a line or on a page. Again, less is more. Leave space between lines of type to ensure legibility.

Be consistent. Make the color, type and styles all the same on all overheads or slides. In powerpoint, you will have the best luck accomplishing this by designing a master slide. (More powerpoint directions can be found in the Powerpoint section.)

The type should be of a size and font that is easy to read, even from the back of the room. If you find yourself thinking or even saying to the audience, "you probably can't read this," then you should not include the slide in your presentation. Make sure to check the readability of your overheads from the back of the room to make sure everyone can see them easily. If you can't read a slide from the back of the room, don't use it. Be sure to leave overheads powerpoint slides up long enough for the audience to read them.